

Dear Professor Devide

I am delighted to be given the opportunity to offer my congratulations as you celebrate your 80th year. In doing so I would also like to acknowledge your distinguished career in plant sciences and your clear success in producing several generations of students who freely acknowledge the great debt that they owe you as a guide and mentor. I feel sure that you regard that as valuable as any personal scientific achievement.

During my only visit to Zagreb in 1976 to examine the Ph D thesis of Drazena Papes I was taken to see a modern version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream". It dispensed with classical scenery and costumes and as I recall it the actors were clowns and acrobats disporting themselves on trapezes and geometrical objects against pure white backgrounds. The performance was exciting and perhaps added new dimensions to Shakespeare's text but of course the classical performances remain with us added to but not being replaced by new interpretation. I am sure that you like me earnestly hope that in this time of molecular analysis and understanding our young scientists will likewise place their interpretations in perspective with the great works of the classical past such as those of Darlington, Stebbins, White and Dobzhansky which must remain the foundations of our concepts of the genetic and chromosomal controls of evolution of populations and species.

I conclude with my very best wishes for your continuing enjoyment of science along with your devotion to music.

Professor Keith Jones

(Formerly Keeper of the Jodrell Laboratory and Deputy Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.)